

**MIDDLE TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**ACADEMIC AFFAIRS, STUDENT LIFE, AND ATHLETICS COMMITTEE
MINUTES**

The Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee met on Tuesday, August 24, 2021, in the Miller Education Center Meeting Room at Middle Tennessee State University.

Call to Order

Committee Chair Pam Wright called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

Roll Call

Committee Chair Wright requested that Board Secretary James Floyd call the roll. The following Committee members were in attendance: J.B. Baker, Tom Boyd, Pete DeLay, Joey Jacobs, Steve Smith, Pam Wright, Rick Cottle, Gabriela Jaimes, Keith Huber, and Chris Massaro. A quorum was declared.

Also present were Trustees Darrell Freeman and Chris Karbowiak. President Sidney A. McPhee; Mark Byrnes, University Provost; Joe Bales, Vice President for University Advancement; Andrew Oppmann, Vice President for Marketing and Communications; Bruce Petryshak, Vice President for Information Technology and Chief Information Officer; Deb Sells, Vice President for Student Affairs and Vice Provost for Enrollment and Academic Services; Alan Thomas, Vice President for Business and Finance; Brenda Burkhart, Chief Audit Executive; James Floyd, University Counsel and Board Secretary; and, Kim Edgar, Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff, were also in attendance.

Approval of Minutes - Action

The first agenda item was approval of the minutes from the May 25, 2021, Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee meeting. Trustee Delay moved to approve the minutes from the May 25, 2021, meeting and Trustee Jacobs seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken

and the motion to approve the minutes from the May 25, 2021, meeting of the Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee passed unanimously.

Update on Graduate Enrollment - Information

President McPhee asked that this item be presented first based on requests from Trustees Boyd and Freeman and then introduced Vice Provost for Research and Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, David Butler. Vice Provost Butler outlined the steps taken for graduate student enrollment growth. Key decisions were made during the pandemic: spent more on marketing; led with positive advertising messages; waived GRE and standardized tests; and reduced application fee. Results showed a 28% increase from Fall 2019 to Fall 2020 and another 2% growth in Fall 2021. The next challenge is to contact eligible people multiple times over the years. By 2025 there will be approximately 420,000 people in the greater Nashville MSA who hold bachelor's degrees but not a graduate degree.

President McPhee connected undergraduate enrollment to the discussion by distributing an information update in response to Trustee Freeman's requests, and asked Vice President Sells to discuss. New freshman enrollment is down 350 students. Recruiters couldn't get into high schools, and the True Blue Tour was cancelled last year. Some high schools are canceling college fairs; however, we will continue our True Blue Tour and online recruiting this fall. New transfer enrollments are down 150 students, not surprising since enrollment at community colleges was down last year. We will be able to go to community colleges to recruit. Undergraduate returners are down 5.5% reflecting their struggle with online learning. The overall enrollment decline will be just over 5%. The official census is not yet available.

President McPhee added that 1,300 students were purged for non-payment last week. If they had not been purged, we would have had flat enrollment.

Trustee Freeman asked what the Board can do to help reverse the trend of declining enrollment.

President McPhee expressed his comfort that the staff is doing the work and creating innovative programs. We had stopped the decline two years ago, but many factors go into the recent decline. Vice President Sells added that in Fall 2019 our total new undergraduate enrollment was the second highest since 2011.

Trustee Boyd next asked when free community college started, and when did MTSU eliminate remedial and developmental programming.

President McPhee responded that we raised our admission standards twice over the last ten years. We have a partnership with Motlow whereby we send students with lower ACT scores to Motlow for remedial and developmental courses. This is one reason that our transfer enrollment is higher over the years. We have an enrollment management plan and group chaired by President McPhee that addresses these environmental and demographic issues.

Trustee Boyd commended the graduate enrollment and noted the Business School in particular. He credited the growth to the online MBA program and the use of consultants to help recruit students and asked if the same strategy could be applied to other online programs.

President McPhee asked Provost Byrnes to speak to our efforts in the online space. Provost Byrnes added that, in addition to the excellent work done by the College of Graduate Studies, contracting with All Campus has provided great growth in the MBA program, but roughly one-third of the revenue goes to the consultant. Vice President Thomas advises on return on investment for these type consultants as we look at adding other programs to their efforts.

Trustee Freeman asked about the decline in minority enrollment over the past five years. He stated that we must address this group to help overall enrollment. Provost Byrnes responded that despite the decrease in the number of minority students, the campus is more diverse proportionately.

President McPhee reminded the Committee that the materials show the good, the challenges, and in the data, retention and graduation rates broken down by demographic groups. The data does not show that Pell-eligible students perform worse than other students.

Committee Chair Wright reminded everyone that the Board passed a motion to increase graduation rates, and the administration is committed to achieving that goal. President McPhee referred to the packet showing plans and programs in progress to meet that goal.

Trustee Jaimes asked how the Board can help with expanding corporate partnerships like the McGuire Management. President McPhee responded that one of the committees today will be dealing with the policy for corporate rates, so more companies can participate.

Rule Promulgation and Related Policy Revision - Action

Associate University Counsel Jeff Farrar presented a revision to Policy 540 Student Conduct and a related rule promulgation. State law dictates a student conduct rule must be promulgated in addition to our internal policy. While the substance is essentially the same; the implementation procedures are different. The policy revisions include cross references to Title IX policy, recognize that administrative law judges can hear student conduct cases, change sanctions related to fines, and incorporate new provisions regarding the right to cross-examination in student discipline hearings. Rule 0240-07-05 is new and incorporates the revised Policy 540.

Chairman Smith moved to approve Rule 0240-07-05 and revisions to Policy 540 Student Conduct, and Trustee Baker seconded the motion.

Trustee Boyd suggested a wording change in Section I, D of the policy to delete "his/her/its" and replace with "the" for clarity.

Trustee Karbowski questioned the deletion of the Section X, B, 1-7 on victim's rights. Mr. Farrar said victim's rights for sexual misconduct and sexual violence are already covered in Policies 27

and 29, so they were not repeated in 540. The remaining part of Section X was moved up to the section on Purpose. Victim's rights are covered in Section I, D.

Trustee Wright questioned the deletion of fines. Mr. Farrar said fines were taken out because they were never utilized or implemented.

Trustee Jaimes questioned the rights of victims, and Mr. Farrar explained that if the victim withdraws the complaint, the University will be able to proceed with the case.

Trustee DeLay moved to amend the motion to accept the revised language, and Trustee Baker seconded. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to approve Rule 0240-07-05 and revisions to Policy 540 Student Conduct passed unanimously.

Rule Promulgation and Related Policy Revision - Action

Assistant University Counsel Sondra Wade presented revisions to Policy 541 Residential Life and Housing and introduced a new rule, 0240-07-07. The revisions aim to clarify the types of spaces within our residential facilities. Also, as requested by the Student Government Association, the visitation section was revised, and revisions to the University's fire safety policy were incorporated. Lastly, the eligibility of housing for part-time students and the availability of summer housing were added.

Trustee Wright asked if the liability for damage section was located somewhere else, and Assistant Counsel Wade said the liability language is located in Section XVI, C.

A motion was made by Trustee Boyd to approve Rule 0240-07-07 and revisions to Policy 541 Residential Life and Housing, and the motion was seconded by Trustee Baker. A roll call vote was taken and the motion to approve Rule 0240-07-07 and revisions to Policy 540 Student Conduct passed unanimously.

Approval of Expedited Tenure - Action

Provost Byrnes presented two newly hired department chairs who were recommended for tenure by their respective deans, department and college committees, the Provost, and President.

Chairman Smith moved to approve expedited tenure for the two candidates. Trustee Boyd seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Appointment of Chair of Excellence - Action

Provost Byrnes distributed a proposal to tie the Jennings and Rebecca Jones Chair of Excellence in Urban and Regional Planning to the Director of the Business Economic Research Center and to appoint Dr. Murat Arik as the chair holder. The Jennings Jones Foundation has been consulted and approves of this plan to see the chair filled.

Chairman Smith moved to approve the appointment of the Jennings and Rebecca Jones Chair of Excellence in Urban and Regional Planning. Trustee Boyd seconded the motion. A voice vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

Notification of New Center - Information

The Office of Professional Sales housed in the Jones College of Business will be elevated to the Center for Professional Selling. Its establishment will hone our students' skills in the area of selling and attract funding as the only center of its kind in Tennessee.

Post-Approval Monitoring Report - Information Item

THEC invites us to provide enrollment and graduation rate information about new programs for five years from approval, and a summary is included in the materials.

Trustee Boyd asked about the process when a program doesn't meet benchmarks. Provost Byrnes said that the low producing program may be folded under another degree as a concentration or eliminated. Chairman Smith asked that the actual benchmarks for each new program be included the next time this data is presented.

Athletics Update – Information Item

Athletics Director Massaro presented on facilities and conference realignment. The two are connected. We just received approval to begin designing our tennis facility. The larger facility project related to the student athlete performance center is also in progress with meetings in September and October. This fall, we will cut the ribbon on a new golf facility at the Grove in Williamson County.

ACC, Big 10, and Pac-12 will announce a scheduling alliance to enhance their television packages. Their non-conference games will be cut in half, so the number of guaranteed televised games will decline for FBS schools. Typically these schools play four non-conference home games.

NCAA will overhaul its governance structure. The alliance of the three conferences will create a voting block within the NCAA that will influence TV scheduling and the college football playoff. Eventually 40-50 schools will operate on a higher tier, and we would remain on the second tier, but we have to continue to be aggressive on our facilities plan.

Trustee Karbowiak asked about the impact on revenue due to these changes. Athletics Director Massaro answered that revenue potential is there if we get into a better affiliation with CFP and better individual TV contracts. Group of Five conferences looking to align similar to the ACC/Big 10/Pac-12 alignment. President McPhee added that the presidents of Conference USA schools meet monthly and are looking at alliances that would enhance the TV contracts.

Massaro added that due to COVID, financial planning has been in turmoil. Some programs have high debt due to facilities payments and empty stadiums. There may be an intermediate step in six months for us to be able to plan, but we have lots of optimism for how it will settle.

New Business

Trustee Freeman wanted to ask questions based upon information provided by President McPhee. Committee Chair Wright declined to add another agenda item, so Trustee Freeman requested that it be on the Board of Trustees agenda instead.

Adjournment

Committee Chair Wright adjourned the meeting at 10:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Academic Affairs, Student Life, and Athletics Committee